

REMARKS

Claims 21 through 24 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(b) as unpatentable over the prior art appearing in the Specification in view of Cox (US Pat No 3,936,542).

Applicant has amended claim 21 to further limit the claimed curing agent. Support for such limitation can be found in originally filed claim 1, and does not constitute new matter.

In column 7, lines 34 – 37, Cox discloses the use of organic bases to neutralize the carboxylic acid function by converting it into the carboxylate salt. These organic bases include ethanolamine, diethanolamine, triethanolamine, morpholine, and alkylamines, such as ethylamine, propylamine, and butyl amine. Cox also discloses that each of these organic bases is a disfavored embodiment, with the strong base ammonium hydroxide being preferred. Applicant notes that each of these compounds listed has only one amine moiety, and therefore does not meet the requirement of amended claim 21, that each curing agent have at least two amine moieties. Since all of the organic bases listed by Cox disclose only a single moiety, there is nothing in the cited art that would suggest to one of ordinary skill in the art that the use of compounds with two moieties would be suitable when applied to the invention of Cox.

Furthermore, Cox discloses the use of a self-thickening resin in order to increase the viscosity of the resin. In column 6, lines 5 – 27, Cox describes these commercially available resins as initially possessing a viscosity in the range of 30 to 400 centipoises, with a pH of from 2.5 to about 6.5. When a base is added to the self-thickening resin particles thus raising the pH, the particles swell to a great extent to forming a highly viscous gel emulsion having a viscosity between 3,000 and 100,000 centipoises. According to Cox, these swelling properties are caused by the conversion of polycarboxylic acids to polycarboxylate salts.

These self-thickening resins must be included in the resin of Cox in order to increase the viscosity of the resin.

The Applicant's resin works on a different principle, and thus the specialty self-thickening resins are not needed. On page 6, lines 8 through 19 of the application as filed, the Applicant discloses that the precoated curing agent of the current invention contains cross-linking agents that increase the viscosity of the applied resin. Further, on page 10 lines 1 – 7 of the application as filed, the Applicant states that in the case of the di- and tri-amines, "the curing agent may form covalent bonds with some of the substrate, and may additionally provide amine functional groups to encourage crosslinking with the adhesive."

Thus, it is apparent that the applied resin of the applicant does not require the inclusion of specialty self-thickening resins in order to increase the viscosity. Therefore, the combination of Cox with the admitted prior art would not realize the present invention as defined by the amended claims. The applicant therefore submits that this rejection is overcome. The cited references simply do not obviate the current claims 21 through 24 within the meaning of 35 USC 103(a).

Claim 25 stands rejected as unpatentable as set forth above, and further in view of Inoue (USP 5,399,402).

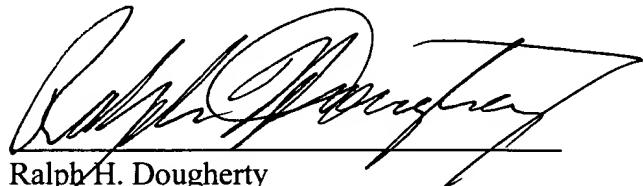
Because of the failings of the admitted prior art in view of US Pat No 3936542 to Cox, this rejection also cannot stand. Inoue et al. do not make up the deficiencies that are present in the references combined above. Thus it is clear that claim 25 is not obvious from these references within the meaning of 35 USC 103.

Since the amendment to the claims does not add more claims than previously paid for, no additional fee is required.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and these remarks, this application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, and such favorable action is respectfully requested on behalf of Applicant.

Respectfully submitted,



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